



MINNESOTA STATE
Board of Trustees

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

NAME: Ad Hoc Committee on Future Readiness

DATE: August 14, 2024

TITLE: Finalize committee report and recommendations

Action

Review and Discussion

This item is required by policy

PRESENTERS

Kathy Sheran, Committee Chair

PURPOSE

The ad hoc committee is charged with assisting the Board of Trustees in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities related to preparing the system for the future and is charged with considering and offering recommendations for the structures and processes needed to support that role. The committee will review and finalize a draft report and recommendations, which is included below.

DRAFT REPORT

Purpose

The Ad Hoc Committee on Future Readiness is charged with assisting the Board of Trustees in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities related to preparing the system for the future. The ad hoc committee is charged with considering and offering recommendations for the structures and processes needed to support that role.

Background

The following proposal aims to strengthen the board's capacity to regularly engage in discussions and policy considerations that will ensure the future-readiness of the system. Recommended changes to committee meeting processes are designed to help trustees work with the Chancellor to prioritize future-focused thinking, planning, and support. These recommendations offer a process that creates space for discussing areas that are future focused including but not limited to: the emerging education market, market competition and positioning, maintaining our value proposition and relevance into the future, examining the integration of artificial intelligence, assuring the systems financial framework is balanced and anticipates the future, etc.

The ad hoc committee's hope is that these processes and practices will be maintained to sustain future-focused work by the trustees in board and committee work.

Recommendations

1. Each board committee will dedicate time at the beginning of the year to discuss and prioritize 2-3 critical strategic topics that will help inform the annual committee work plan.
2. Board committees will develop their agendas to address three components of system management:
 - a. Policy: achieve goal of reviewing all policies over rolling 5-year period; identify policy enhancement & simplification which support operations and strategic initiatives.
 - b. Operations: base charge of committee as defined in its charter and additional delegated responsibility by full board including review of practices utilized by staff and administration when implementing policy.
 - c. Strategic Topics: 2-3 areas of focus annually that significantly move the system forward.
3. In advance of committee meetings, a preparatory discussion should take place between the Committee Chair, Committee Vice Chair, Cabinet Lead, and Presidential liaisons. During this discussion, content should be planned in alignment with the annual work plan and focused around the three components. Policy and operations topics will be minimized to allow for more focus on strategic topics identified by board committees.
4. Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs will assist staff in synthesizing presentations on policy and operations so that trustees are able to ask clarifying questions and have discussion around areas that offer staff insight into where the board is interested in heading.
5. Trustees are expected to read and absorb meeting materials prior to committee meetings and direct clarifying questions to their Cabinet lead prior to committee meetings. Information included in meeting materials will not be re-presented during committee meetings so most of committee meeting time can be spent in discussion on the highest priority areas.

Other Considerations

During ad hoc committee discussions, considerations emerged that are important to board work but outside the scope of the ad hoc committee's charge. These considerations are included below.

- The work of board committees is not intended to supplant board training sessions and presentations on trends affecting the future of higher education. The board should engage in further discussion and planning of board trainings including consideration of appropriate training topics, input from board committees on potential training topics, and broader audiences and voices to include in board trainings.
- Periodic review of strategic priorities should occur and requires clarification on who is responsible for this work.
- The above recommendations may not quite fit the work of some board committees, e.g. audit, executive.
- Further consideration should be given to committee structure and important areas that don't have a clear 'home', e.g. IT, data analytics, workforce development.